

Volante Farm, LLC

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Re: Docket Number 05-015-1

To Whom It May Concern:

As a Professional Horseman, training and showing horses in Hunter and Jumper competitions throughout the North East United States, I am in strong opposition to the proposal that every horse be permanently identified and tracked every time it moves from one location to another.

The logistics of this proposal are almost inconceivable to horsemen, who by the very nature of their business, move horses from stable to stable and between various show grounds in order to train and sell their products. While I agree that it is vital to the safety of the United States' food supply that all food source animals be able to be tracked, horses are not part of the food chain in this country.

I firmly believe that this proposal poses an unnecessary financial burden on the owners of show and race horses which will never be introduced into the human food chain. The implantation of a micro-chip in every horse is not well thought out in respect to the costs to the owners, estimated by Amy Mann to be around \$150; The burden on Veterinarians for recording the details of every implantation and the associated costs to track the movements.

In my small stable, in any given week, I may have one to two horses arriving for training for a day a week or indefinitely. Also in that week, I may take a horse to another stable down the street or across the country for trial or a lesson. I will also have two to six horses traveling to a horse show during that week. All these activities are vital to my livelihood. Who will be responsible to track and record these movements and at what cost?

As a Professional Horseman, I can also see the burden this proposal will place on show managers for keeping yet another animal identification database in addition to the breed and association numbers already in place. Will the show managers be responsible for tracking the movements of horses onto and off of the various show grounds around the nation and who will be forced to pay for this?

Although I see the very real need to protect our nation's food supply, the inclusion of horses in this program has not been well thought out. I would strongly recommend an extended period of public comment and evaluation of the costs to the horse industry.

Best Regards,

Steven Kirk

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Trainers:

Steve Kirk Katie Kirk